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ABSTRACT

This paper argues for considerably higher expectations for the qualifications of language teachers by focusing on what preparations could and should offer. Because efforts to address issues of teacher preparation confront tacit assumptions about language teaching, the paper draws on the experience of literature training and hiring as a parallel in order to identify some of these tacit assumptions and provoke questions. It points out the dramatic difference in expectations that are encountered when comparing the preparation for teaching language to the preparation for the teaching of literature or linguistics. (Contains 10 endnotes and 46 references.) (Author/VWL)

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Language Teaching: Raising Expectations for Instructor Preparation

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Too familiar to merit discussion, so simple that virtually anyone is expected to be able to do it, paradoxically so difficult to do well that we are almost universally disappointed with the results, yet still of insufficient interest to be accorded time and attention in Ph.D. programs—language teaching continues to be viewed as the problem child of language and literature departments. In spite of the number of literature scholars who find themselves teaching language, preparation to teach language is viewed with little enthusiasm in most graduate programs. For far too many students, Kaplan's (1993) experience in a French literature Ph.D. program is frustratingly familiar: "None of us was prepared to deal with the difference between our training and our actual work, teaching French" (p. 166).

Efforts to think more seriously about the preparation of Ph.D.s who will teach language often collide with the survival interests of a department's literature faculty. In a graduate program with a limited number of requirements and pressure to keep students progressing satisfactorily to the degree, allocating more time to preparation for language teaching could easily result in a reduction in literature study—potentially weakening graduate students' preparation in literature and almost certainly reducing course enrollments for the literature faculty. Literature specialists quite understandably favor the study of literature, readily admitting that they are not experts in language teaching (nor do they want to be, nor do they want their best students to be, since their students' accomplishments reflect back on them and the status of themselves and their programs).

I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for alerting me to a document produced by the Commission on Professional Standards of the American Association of Teachers of French, "The Teaching of French: A Syllabus of Competence" (Murphy 1987). The document uses the term "competence" somewhat differently than I do here but asserts the importance of competence in the areas of culture, language proficiency, linguistics, literature, and methodology.

The result is something like a vicious circle. Graduate students depend on their department faculty to prepare them, but literature faculty have an important stake in emphasizing literature over language study. Administrators readily admit that they have to rely on department faculty (that is, primarily literature specialists) for guidance in defining faculty lines and ultimately in approving hiring requests and decisions, and budgets are always tight. If adding a position for the preparation of graduate students in language means giving up a literature position, literature faculty have little incentive to agree. Neither are promotion and tenure requirements necessarily clear for such new faculty in language (nor in many cases do workloads leave time for research and publication). Too often the solution is to hire language faculty at the lecturer rank, placing yet more obstacles in the way of preparation of graduate students to teach language. Lecturers are too frequently disenfranchised and prevented from setting policy or holding leadership roles in their departments. They may not even be consulted about language preparation or expectations for graduate students, and if lecturers do work with graduate student TAs, their lack of rank and status may severely hamper their efforts. In the end, those who have power typically do not have sufficient incentive to address the problem of the preparation of language teachers, and those who have incentive do not have the power. Unfortunately, the latter group may have grown so accustomed to their marginalized role that even if they were to find themselves in positions of power they might not be able to envision truly significant change.

When new Ph.D.s emerge from such programs to be hired as new faculty, even if they have had some experience as TAs in language teaching, their "expertise" may have been acquired largely on the job, through trial and error, and often with little time for contact with research and scholarship on language teaching and learning. Although these new faculty may be enthusiastic teachers, they remain poorly prepared, not only for their own career in language teaching, but also for participation in policy-making and hiring decisions in their departments. When these faculty find themselves on hiring committees the cycle begins again; they may be no better informed about language teacher preparation than they were when they were graduate students. Aware of the gaps in their own background, they read the applications of candidates with preparation similar to their own and wonder, "What should we be looking for?"

Revealingly, the question "What should we be looking for?" is open to at least two interpretations. The first reading accepts the current situation in language hiring to ask, "Given current possibilities, what combination of candidate strengths is best?" The second reading

rejects the current situation to ask, "Instead of what we have now, what *should* we be asking for?" In the discussion below I will take the second position in order to suggest an expanded potential for the first. That is, I will argue for considerably higher expectations for the qualifications of language teachers. I realize that higher expectations will be difficult to meet under current conditions of teacher preparation, but my intent is to focus attention on what preparation could offer, and in my opinion, what it *should* offer.

Since efforts to address issues of teacher preparation quickly confront tacit assumptions about language teaching, I will at times draw on the experience of literature training and hiring as a parallel in order to identify some of these tacit assumptions and provoke questions. What I want to point out is the dramatic difference in expectations we encounter when comparing the preparation for teaching language to the preparation for the teaching of literature or linguistics. Language teaching is *not* so simple that virtually anyone can do it, but as long as we treat it that way, we have no right to complain about the results and their consequences (including low enrollments in literature classes taught in the foreign language, the under-preparedness of students in those classes, and the frustration of students unhappy with their level of achievement in language classes). In the following discussion I will first contrast language preparation to literature preparation by outlining a higher set of expectations for language teachers, then translate that outline into a sample of the kinds of questions that we should be asking language job candidates to be able to answer.

A note on the pairing of language with literature. I have chosen to use literature for comparison because it is the most common degree background for college language teaching and because I see no sign that this situation is likely to change in the near future. My choice of literature does not exclude potential pairings with linguistics, anthropology, history, or other disciplines and in the following discussion "literature" could be replaced by any of these other disciplines, with corresponding adjustments in content. The larger question, of which departments and programs *should* be responsible for preparing language instructors, is far too complex to go into here. Although second language acquisition (SLA) is often cited as a likely candidate, even a brief glance at the scholarship of SLA indicates that as currently conceived it is not centrally concerned with the complex and inseparable cultural components of language teaching, including specific cultural meanings, interpretations, cross-cultural comparisons, and the integral relevance of cultural texts to language knowledge, but rather with the question of how learners acquire (or lose) a second or foreign language (whether in classroom settings or non-classroom settings).

Although the range of cultural knowledge required for expert language instruction is broader than any one discipline, the connection with cultural texts is extremely important. Given current institutional structures in which no departmental home is ideal, language and literature departments continue to provide potentially broader resources than other locations. This fact, rather than any personal preference, is the reason for the comparison I have chosen to use here.

One more qualification: Advocacy for higher expectations for language instructors does not entail making that preparation an obligatory part of the graduate language and literature program (although personally I would recommend it to most students). Like other decisions, this choice should be an available option, ideally to be viewed as a necessity for those who wish to be qualified to teach language (and not so for those who do not). In an ideal world, individuals without preparation to teach language would not be hired to teach language, just as individuals without qualification in other disciplines are limited in what they can be hired to teach. The strongest job candidates would be prepared in two subfields, e.g., literature *and* language. As long as we expect disciplinary study "in the original language" there will be a need for a versatile professoriate that can integrate the study of language, literature, and culture, and this fact deserves corresponding attention in the Ph.D. programs that prepare the professoriate for its scholarly and professional responsibilities.

Content Focus

In their preparation to be literature specialists, it is normal for students to select certain content areas such as genres, authors, periods, or interest in literary theory. While there may be heated debate about the validity of such classification, there is no contention that literature study is without content. By comparison, language study is often considered to be "skills only," without content of its own. One of the most dangerous and damaging misconceptions about language teaching is the implicit belief that good language teaching has mostly to do with technique. Far too many faculty and administrators naively imagine that the most important attributes of a successful language instructor are native or near-native fluency, lively techniques, and a kind and encouraging personality. Even the usual designation "teacher training" implies a focus on performance that is often distorted to represent technique as its most important aspect. Of course, "technique" is important for any successful teaching, but as in all college-level instruction, at the heart of good teaching is *knowledge*.

Knowledge Base of the Language Instructor

Perhaps because it is uncommon to talk about language in terms of content knowledge, there is no commonly accepted schema for this task. One possibility is an eight-part schema that includes three of the competences proposed by Canale and Swain (1980) and modified by Canale (1983), further amended to add "cultural" competence, plus the traditional four skills of language study, to yield the following (Chaput 1996):

Competences	**Skills**
Grammatical (Grammar and Lexicon)	Speaking
Socio-linguistic	Listening
Discourse	Reading
Cultural	Writing

This schema is by no means perfect, but it allows us to talk about the content of language study with some sense of structure.

Grammatical Competence

Grammatical competence as defined by Canale (1983) is "the knowledge and skill required to understand and express accurately the literal meaning of utterances," including aspects of phonology, orthography, vocabulary, word formation, and sentence formation (p. 7). In connection with language instruction, grammatical competence is often interpreted to mean native-level ability, but I am aware of no studies that demonstrate that students learn more or more accurately from a native speaker than from a competent non-native. Moreover, students quickly become frustrated when teachers cannot present and explain grammar in ways that allow students to master[1] grammatical patterns for their own language production. For much grammar, what is important is less the ability to model correct usage (since models can be found in many sources beyond the individual teacher) than descriptive and analytical knowledge of grammar that allows the teacher to structure its presentation in effective ways. How this is done will depend greatly on the language and the nature of its grammatical constructions. It will also depend on the learning styles of the students in the class, since there is increasing evidence to support the importance of material being presented in modes that facilitate student learning (see, for example, Ehrman and Oxford 1990; Entwistle 1981; Leaver 1993; Oxford 1990). We can assume that teachers will encounter the

full range of learning styles, which means that they must be prepared to present grammar in multiple ways.

An analytical knowledge of grammar is therefore an important resource that will aid the instructor in choosing what and how to teach. The teacher will not necessarily choose to teach grammar in analytical ways, but rather such analytical knowledge will be part of the teacher's knowledge base, to be drawn on as necessary for effective teaching. To assist students who are highly analytical, that knowledge may be required for direct instruction, if not in the classroom, then in handouts or in office hours. So, too, will grammar need to be presented in communicative frameworks, orally, visually, exemplified, explained, and interactively practiced. Knowledge of grammar will shape the sequence of topics presented, assisting the teacher in finding a sequence that promotes the quickest progress with the greatest communicative potential and the fewest obstacles. As an example, Rutherford and Smith (1988) discuss the relative difficulty of acquiring patterns for the use of subject pronouns in Spanish and English (based on White [1984]). They conclude that the complexity of the task for Spanish learners of English dictates that instruction will need to be *explicit*, while for English learners of Spanish the simpler pattern of optional omission can be handled *implicitly*. The choice of explicit vs. implicit instruction will have consequences not only for the nature of the presentation, but also for avoiding the "mountain out of a molehill" effect, when the explicit teaching of implicitly acquirable patterns creates unnecessary confusion which then requires time-consuming explicit correction and instruction. Conversely, implicit treatments of conceptually complex topics leave students confused and often unable to progress toward desirable levels of grammatical competence.

A language teacher should be expected to have a growing expertise and interest in all relevant aspects of the grammar of the second language (L2) as necessary for effective teaching. Ideally this knowledge will include phonetics and phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Indeed, outside of the Romance and Germanic language families, much of the burden of language instruction (for example, in Slavic and Asian languages) has been borne by linguists, and many language instructors in those fields continue to be active investigators of the languages they teach. The importance of this knowledge should not be misunderstood to mean that instructors will be *teaching* descriptive phonology, morphology, syntax, etc.—rather, that by understanding morphological, syntactic, and other patterns, they are able to shape their language teaching in more productive ways.[2] As a vivid example, Russian conjugation has been viewed as having thousands of "irregular" forms (Powers 1968), yet an understanding of

morphology allows the patterns of regularity to become evident and the number of irregular verbs reduced to 26 (Townsend 1975), or even 19 (Garza 1994). In some languages (e.g., Sanskrit) the teaching of phonology and morphology is routine, and indeed it is difficult to imagine how Sanskrit could be taught otherwise. Yet in modern languages we often find the baby thrown out with the bathwater—an avoidance of linguistic description as if it threatens a return to grammar-translation, rather than an investigation of grammar's benefit as an organizational tool for more successful language learning.

A tacit assumption that remains prevalent (outside of language and SLA fields) is that all that language students really need is sufficient exposure and practice. Advocates of this view often minimize the role of college language instruction and see the solution in sending students abroad to study, "immersed" in the language and culture. There is no doubt that such immersion is beneficial, but there is also evidence that the length and quality of instruction before students go abroad will have significant impact on the success of their learning (Brecht et al. 1993). In fact, the most important factor for Russian acquisition during study abroad turns out to be precisely students' knowledge of grammar before they go:

> The data in the current study provide the first empirical evidence that investment in grammar instruction in the early years of instruction may result in advances in speaking and listening skills at the upper-intermediate and advanced levels. . . . These data . . . underline the necessity to keep knowledge of grammar an equal partner in the goals of learning and instruction—not only for the skills they directly represent, but also for the good that accuracy does in advancing speaking and listening (p. 21).

Indeed there is considerable research and scholarship that supports the importance of grammar in language instruction (see, for example, Rutherford and Smith [1988]).

An obstacle to discussions of the role of grammar in language instruction arises from the touching of emotional chords for students and faculty alike. It is human nature to recall personal experiences learning language and to generalize that experience to others. The experience of poorly, painfully, or excessively taught grammar, as well as experience with the failures of grammar-translation, can lead individuals to reject the explicit teaching of grammar in courses of today. Such a confusion of *how* grammar is taught with *why* it is taught can have serious consequences for the success of language study. Grammar is an essential organizing tool in human language, a network of conventions that allows individuals to communicate meaning with relative reliability. Without

grammar, communication would be impossible. Grammar is no more than a set of patterns that allows speakers to identify the relationships between words. It seems only common sense to teach language so that such patterns are evident to student-learners, rather than keeping them secret and hoping that students will stumble onto the correct patterns on their own. Interestingly, students at intermediate levels of language study often judge their own grammar knowledge to be too weak and put grammar high on their list of priorities (e.g., Ke 1995). The role of grammar in language study should not be as goal (i.e., linguistic description), but rather as tool (for accurate and successful comprehension and production), and in turn the teacher's knowledge of grammar will be an essential resource to be used as a tool in structuring language study to facilitate student mastery of essential patterns.

Lexical Knowledge

For Canale lexical knowledge is part of grammatical competence, but I have separated it here because of its crucial importance. Lexical knowledge is one of the richest content areas of language study. The continuing debate about whether vocabulary should only be learned in context or organized into lists completely misses the crucial point that students must have access to the culturally specific meanings of words and their networks of associations. E. D. Hirsch (1987) called attention to the importance of lexical knowledge in reading comprehension, and his notion of cultural literacy remains controversial in part because of its dynamic nature. Word meaning is dependent on the communities and contexts of usage, so that to know what an L2 word means is not merely to know its L1 equivalent—that is, what the L1 form means to L1 speakers of a given community—but rather to know something about its tradition of usage (and therefore its "meaning") among speakers of the L2. Lexical meaning is constructed in implicit contracts between speakers, based on shared experience. That experience can include associations of many kinds: historical, political, ideological, cultural (in the form of cultural values), temporal, regional, attitudinal (e.g., positive or negative), textual, and many more. The anthropologist Becker (1992) calls the absence of this knowledge for language learners "the silence of memory." He writes, "*Everything* anyone says has a history . . . But when you speak a foreign language, everything is contemporary, for outsiders have very little memory in that new language and its past is silent" (p. 117). It is just this kind of silence that emigrée Eva Hoffman (1989) has in mind in her memoir when she describes how the lack of a shared American experience prevents her from understanding her boyfriend's unhappiness:

> My head pounds with the effort of understanding. The words my Texan speaks come out from some unknown place; I can't tell what burden of feeling infuses them, what has led up to this pass, to their youthful extremity. Maybe if I could imagine his childhood, and the loneliness, and the great nothingness he speaks of, I would know the meaning of his words to him . . . But . . . the pictures he draws are stark and melodramatic in my mind, because I don't know the stuff of the lives that fill them (p. 187).

A language absent of its history, whether national or personal, is only a substitute code for the L1. In order to interact with L2 speakers it is essential to be aware of the existence of the history that constitutes meaning, to be sensitive to how words "mean" through being symbolic representations of the L2/C2 experience. A revealing example from the Soviet Russian experience as described by Boym (1994) links the personal level to larger social and cultural perspectives:

> What is shared is silence, tone of voice, nuance of intonation. To say a full word is to say too much . . . This peculiar form of communication "with halfwords" is a mark of belonging to an imagined community that exists on the margin of the official public sphere. Hence the American metaphors for being sincere and authentic—"saying what you mean," "going public," and "being straightforward"—do not translate properly into the Soviet and Russian contexts. "Saying what you mean" could be interpreted as being stupid, naive, or not streetwise. Such a profession of sincerity could be seen, at best, as a sign of foreign theatrical behavior; at worst, as a cunning provocation. There is no word for authenticity in Russian, but there are two words for truth: *pravda* and *istina*. It is possible to tell the truth (*pravda*) but *istina* . . . must remain unarticulated. In this form of indirect communication, quasi-religious attitudes toward language, devices of romantic poetry, revolutionary underground conspiracies, and tactics of dissident intelligentsia strangely converge (p. 1).

This type of cultural knowledge is precisely why language study is so often said to be the key to cultural understanding. It is not the ability to engage in primitive communication with L2 speakers that provides access to a foreign culture, but rather that by getting *inside* the language, exploring meanings in L2 terms (rather than as translations of L1), students begin to gain access to cultural values and perspectives that would be masked by L1 translation (with its accompanying networks of L1 history and associations).[3]

The language instructor plays a crucial role in making students aware of the content knowledge of language, specifically in guiding

students to learn lexical meanings appropriate to the L2/C2. Without guidance, how are students to know where similarities and differences exist? How can they tell, especially at the beginning stages of language study, whether their assumptions about word meaning are justified? Without the teacher's intervention we are left with several unappealing choices: (a) allow students to learn vocabulary incorrectly, as new labels for L1 meanings; (b) alert students to the problem of lexical meaning and hope that they figure out for themselves what words mean; (c) decide that the problem is too great to deal with in college classes and postpone it for "later," perhaps for students to do (or not do) on their own in study abroad; (d) simply ignore the problem and pretend it doesn't exist.

As with grammar, the importance and complexity of lexical meaning does not mean that teachers should be delivering lectures. Rather, they will have to be skilled in finding ways to introduce and teach the lexicon (through objects, pictures, examples, and texts, rather than simple lists) so that students begin to acquire a vocabulary that will allow accurate and successful communication with L2 speakers and writers, and to do so within the time constraints of college courses.

Socio-Linguistic Competence

According to Canale (1983),

> Socio-linguistic competence . . . addresses the extent to which utterances are produced and understood *appropriately* in different sociolinguistic contexts depending on contextual factors such as status of participants, purposes of the interaction, and norms or conventions of interaction . . . Appropriateness of utterances refers to both appropriateness of meaning and appropriateness of form. Appropriateness of meaning concerns the extent to which particular communicative functions (e.g. commanding, complaining and inviting), attitudes (including politeness and formality) and ideas are judged to be proper in a given situation. . . . Appropriateness of form concerns the extent to which a given meaning (including communicative functions, attitudes and propositions/ideas) is represented in a verbal and/or non-verbal form that is proper in a given sociolinguistic context (p. 7).

Beyond "knowing" appropriate behavior, teachers need to be able to articulate the structures of social rituals, their scripted behaviors, the formulas required, perspectives on behaviors as optional or obligatory, and how the behaviors might reflect deeper cultural values. Hoffman's (1989) emigre experience provides another example:

> There are some turns of phrase to which I develop strange allergies. "You're welcome," for example strikes me as a gaucherie, and I can hardly bring myself to say it—I suppose because it implies that there's something to be thanked for, which in Polish would be impolite. The very places where language is at its most conventional, where it should be most taken for granted, are the places where I feel the prick of artifice . . . (p. 106).

Thus the "silence of memory" that Becker notes applies equally to socio-linguistic topics and behaviors, and this ground is even more unstable. Social behaviors are affected by the age of participants, class, ideology, ethnic and religious background, regional differences, degrees of intimacy and social "register" (not an exhaustive list). As with the lexicon, if such knowledge is not incorporated into coursework, prioritized, and "taught" in some effective way, students will be left to grapple with incorrect assumptions and misapprehensions on their own, risking behaving rudely or inconsiderately even with the best of intentions. At worst, students will decide that such behaviors "don't matter," or perhaps insensitively assume that their cultural ways are "better" and therefore justifiably imposed on their C2 interlocutors.[4]

Discourse Competence

Knowledge of discourse competence varies dramatically among languages taught, since for many languages discourse patterns have only begun to be studied. The lack of explicit knowledge does not make these patterns any less significant, and native L2 speakers will immediately sense differences in style and register, phrasings appropriate to some discourses but inappropriate to others, special uses of discourse-specific devices and phrasings for ironic, artistic, or other special effect. (For example, without such knowledge, parody is unrecognizable.) In conversation and debate in the L2, students will require at least a minimal repertoire of phrases that allow them to hold the floor, interrupt, summarize, rephrase, buy time for thought, and other essential conversational gambits (Kramsch 1981). If students are to become sensitive to the meanings conveyed by discourse conventions and eventually to master at least a partial repertoire, they will need to study the differences and eventually to choose to use (or avoid) conventions for their personal communicative purposes. Once again, the knowledge behind the curtain of the "silence of memory" is part of the knowledge content of language study, and therefore an important concern of language instructors.

Cultural Competence

Culture competence is not a category identified by Canale (1983), who could correctly argue that all of the competences are cultural. However, by omitting a specific category of cultural competence it would be too easy for many aspects of both high and low culture to be seen as peripheral qualifications on the competences already discussed. Designating cultural competence draws attention to the importance of traditional aspects and artifacts of culture, from anthropological perspectives on deep culture (e.g., Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck 1961; Geertz 1973; see also Chaput 1997; Ortuño 1991) to popular and intellectual perspectives on the high culture of literature and the arts, and the cultural importance of perspectives and values incorporated in cultural views of history. In the United States, authors such as Richard Shenkman point to the importance of historical myths in defining and supporting national identity. Shenkman (1991) writes, "The danger is not that we have myths. They tell us who we are and what we cherish and all people have them. The danger is hiding from the fact that they are myths" (p. xii). In studying the cultural heritage of speakers of L2 it will be important to become acquainted with each nation's or community's historical heritage as seen from different perspectives in order to separate and contextualize C1 interpretations[5] of events (which may be more familiar to students) from the C2 interpretations themselves. Human knowledge in the humanities is inevitably viewed through a cultural lens, and popular interpretations are important in maintaining the cultural myths that represent significant values to a culture at a given period in time. "Knowing history" must be recognized as a social construction; understanding another culture requires understanding C2 perceptions of C2 history as well as the contributions of those perceptions to national attitudes. Similarly, reading a work of foreign literature through an American cultural lens is a very different experience from trying to see that same work in the terms in which it has been received by the L2 reading public. Contrasting two cultural readings increases the potential for insight into both the work itself and the culture in which it was produced, as well as stimulating reflection on the attitudes and values of the native culture.

The Four Skills

The four skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing are better known and therefore require less comment. What does deserve note is that language instructors, as experts in their fields, should have more to offer hiring committees than anecdotal or personal experience in the development of these skills. There exist good introductions

to teaching language written by such authors as Lee and VanPatten (1995), Omaggio Hadley (1993), Cook (1991), Brown (1987), Rivers (1983), Stevick (1982), and others that provide overviews of new and old perspectives on the acquisition of skills. So are there numerous specialized books on single skill areas, many of which can be found listed in the bibliographies of these introductory volumes. Well-prepared language instructor candidates should be able to discuss the acquisition of skills with some reference to both tradition and research efforts. When each new instructor is an autodidact, learning in the classroom by trial and error, there is always the danger that discredited techniques will be repeated again and again by different individuals in different venues, each time as an isolated "innovation" and with optimistic hopes for success. Rutherford (1988) provides a painful reminder of the cyclical history of methods of language instruction. His description of "vernaculars as cultural vehicles" and of a time when language learning "drew a distinction between the study of grammar and of literature . . . and relied on an inductive methodology" sounds quite modern, yet he is speaking about the Renaissance (p. 16).[6] If language instructors are truly expert, they should be at least minimally aware that "virtually every contemporary 'innovation' in language teaching seems to have an antecedent somewhere back in t[he] 2,500-year history of language pedagogy" (p. 17) and that recent r[e]search both credits and discredits age-old assumptions that for centuries have been supported by little more than intuition and optimism.

The Role of "Techniques"

Language teaching techniques can be evaluated only in reference to their intended goals, whether these are language and cultural knowledge (competences), skill development, or both simultaneously. Moreover, the relationship between technique and goal is not always (in fact, frequently is not) transparent. Multitudes of teachers still behave in class as if drills will lead to communication, or communicative language activities will automatically lead to the acquisition of grammar. Virtue is seen in snappy drills that bear little resemblance to authentic communication and hours are spent in "communicative activities" that bore students to tears. Long-respected techniques, such as having students read aloud before translating (now discredited), are used without question, and time, that most precious classroom commodity, is often squandered with little sense of how scarce and precious it is (Chaput 1996).

Well-prepared language teachers should have given serious thought to all of these issues and shown a reluctance to adapt traditional

techniques without logical or demonstrated evidence of their efficacy. Elsewhere I have advocated a principal called "Backward Planning," which means that it is advantageous to begin with goals and objectives, and then to work backward to see what is necessary to reach those goals (Chaput 1996). If the objective is spontaneous communication ("encoding personal meaning"), even if on very limited topics, then spontaneous communication *must* be practiced in class. To reach that level students will need much more than memorized phrases and snatches from dialogues; they will need to be able to construct meaning from existing resources (within limitations), which suggests that they will need sufficient command of the grammar and vocabulary to be able to combine and recombine it for their own purposes. This in turn suggests that they will need more than controlled exercises, since they will need practice in combining and recombining. But to overemphasize free combination too early will only sabotage the development of accuracy; accordingly, students' acquisition of the grammar and vocabulary will require some structured practice both before and during efforts at less structured expression. Structured practice in turn will depend on an understanding of relevant grammatical patterns, so that the structured practice illustrates and "teaches" the necessary patterns. Moreover, students cannot begin to combine words into phrases until they have a sense of the words (or phrases) and their appropriate pronunciation, ensuring that the "sound image" of words and phrases is relatively stable in their minds, especially if forms go through different morphological and phonological permutations in different syntactic combinations.

There is no single plan by which a language instructor should map out the sequence of skill acquisition, but it is very important that the subject has been given serious thought. The alternative of random, catch-as-catch-can sequencing is not only extremely inefficient, but it leaves so much to chance (and therefore so many gaps) that the development of spontaneous communication can be frustrated and delayed. Students who are expected to embark on spontaneous communication before they can manage the topics they wish to address can in fact lose confidence rather than gain it, experience a great deal of frustration at what they can't say, and fall into discouragement or indifference.

The Role of the Textbook

Language teachers often expect to rely on textbooks to provide the expertise that they themselves lack, conceding to the textbooks responsibility for grammar explanation in chapter sections that students can read at home and then come to class prepared to practice. The problem with this attitude is that it puts the cart before the horse, or the textbook in the driver's seat, to mix metaphors deliberately. Textbooks are tools, created with the best of intentions to organize student language study, but always exhibiting the opinions, biases, and perspectives of the author and the publisher. Yet it is the language teacher who creates a course and makes the all-important decisions about what can and should be accomplished. Those decisions depend in turn on many factors, including the size of a program, expectations of faculty and students, whether students want to study a given language for instrumental or enrichment purposes (or both), how long students will study, what course options the language sequence presents, whether study abroad is expected or required, what textbooks, technology, and other resource materials are available, and numerous other factors. Textbooks are only one part of this larger picture, and while admittedly at the introductory level a fairly dominant tool, still only a tool at the teacher's disposal.

Language instructors need to have a sense of alternatives, a means of sorting out appropriate goals, and the ability to select a textbook that will be appropriate for reaching those goals. If no appropriate textbook is available, instructors need to be able to consider their options, the advantages and disadvantages of other materials that might be available, or the necessity of modifying course goals. Instructors should also be prepared to supplement textbooks if necessary, but only insofar as supplementation *is* necessary and can be provided in neat and organized form. In courses with masses of handouts, students may need help organizing the material so they can find and refer back to relevant material quickly. The textbook-handout "interface" also requires attention, so that students do not find themselves forced to reconcile what appears to be conflicting information or explanations (resulting in almost certain confusion). On a very practical level, the more of their study time students spend shuffling through paper, looking for answers and trying to sort out confusion, the less time they will have for productive language study.

Native, Near-Native, and Not-So-Native Instructor Proficiency

Attitudes toward instructor proficiency are often determined by tradition more than by reasoned argument. Kaplan (1993) remarks, "You can't work in a French department for long without wondering whether our attachment to French isn't pathological. Both the native speakers and the Americans suffer under a system where language

skills are made a fetish" (p. 178). Why should we cling to the assumption that the best language instructors are necessarily native speakers? Listed below are some frequent assumptions with commentary:

1. Native-level speech provides better models for classroom imitation.

True, but how many minutes will the instructor be speaking? If language (as taught in college courses) develops through structured practice all the way to the level of spontaneous communication, then class is the one certain time in which speakers can interact in ways that are spontaneous and not predictable. Structured practice and modeling are things that *can* be offered outside of class, in audio, video, and sometimes multimedia materials, and for more substantial periods of time. During class is when students should probably be speaking more than listening, since a large part of listening practice can be accomplished outside of class time.

2. Native speakers can model and therefore correct pronunciation more accurately.

True again that they can model pronunciation, but is class the best time to work intensively on pronunciation practice? Many students are frustrated and/or profoundly embarrassed by public correction of their pronunciation, and others will hang on to their L1 accents no matter how much native L2 they hear. It is likely that there are better ways to address pronunciation, perhaps in a combination of language lab and individual consultations.

3. Native speakers speak accurately, preventing students from hearing mistakes.

Surely no one still believes that hearing accurate L2 spoken magically results in accurate L2 production. Accurate L2 production is the result of many factors, including student aptitude, study habits, exposure, presentation, practice, opportunities for meaningful expression, and many others that can be addressed by any competent and *knowledgeable* language instructor, regardless of that individual's "native-level" ability. Naturally instructors must possess sufficient proficiency for the level of language they will teach, able to speak fluently and accurately, for example, at a level sufficient for introductory or intermediate classes of Spanish. But the claim that hearing non-native speech will be detrimental to students' language development has not been proved in practice, nor would we expect it to be true as long as students have ample exposure to native speech in recordings and videos, and as long as the instructor's pronunciation and accuracy is judged near enough to be acceptable.

Moreover, there is a psychological benefit to having non-native instructors teach class groups composed of foreign language (non-heritage) students. An exclusively native-speaking faculty communicates an implicit message that the language cannot be adequately learned by non-natives. When non-native instructors teach, especially at introductory and intermediate levels, they provide a psychological boost to their students, living proof that the language can be mastered and role models for the students in their classes.

4. Native speakers know grammar better than non-natives.

Again, if "know" means "speak accurately and idiomatically," then native speakers have an advantage. But if "know" means the ability to present and explain grammar and vocabulary, non-natives may have a greater advantage. Their own learning experience provides many insights into the kinds of presentations and explanations that work (and don't work), and as a result they are better able to anticipate potential difficulties. Non-native knowledge of grammar is often more systematic, organized for language students rather than adult speakers. Even when both natives and non-natives have taken coursework to prepare them to teach grammar, non-natives still have the advantage of years of experience learning it, including their own successes in finding ways to master difficult topics.

5. Native speakers know culture better than non-natives.

Almost certainly true, unless the non-native has been high school educated in the country of the L2. But if culture is best taught contrastively (Brière 1986; Byram and Esarte-Sarries 1991; Hymes 1962; Peck 1992; Saville-Troike 1982, among others), then non-natives may have the advantage of experience in more explicit cross-cultural contrast and comparison. Native speakers have lived the culture, but teaching requires identification and articulation of cross-cultural differences (and similarities). Relevant cultural perspectives of anthropologists, historians, literature specialists, art historians and others are all accessible to the non-native as well as to the native. Moreover, since it is clearly impossible for any one individual to know all that there is to be known, all instructors, whether native or non-native, will present different profiles, different configurations of strengths. It makes sense for departments to seek a balance of strengths and to give thought to the reasons for privileging some particular strengths or qualifications over others.

6. Native speakers and the culture of the academic institution. A frequent disadvantage of emigre native-speaker hiring is the risk of isolation of language programs and even some language and literature programs. Academic culture is distinctive, requiring sociolinguistic, discourse, and cultural competence of its own. American-educated faculty have a headstart in making their way in this culture, but they still have much to learn to succeed in competing for resources, and for women, more so than men. When native-speaker instructors are monolingual and monocultural in the L2, they are likely to find themselves marginalized in matters of decision-making. When instructors are female, monocultural, and teach language at the rank of lecturer (instead of as assistant professors teaching a combination of language and literature), they face almost insurmountable obstacles in gaining inclusion into their institution's academic culture. Feelings of alienation and invisibility can demoralize teachers, discouraging them from putting in extra effort and eliminating incentives for innovation and creativity. Unappreciated, their enthusiasm may decline, leaving them fond of their students, responsible in following the textbook, but unexcited about innovation that will result in more work for them, and unmotivated to put in the kind of effort needed to improve language instruction.

The mystique surrounding the native speaker can perhaps be traced to still-prevalent naive assumptions that students learn language much as children learn their first language, exclusively or largely through exposure (or, in other words, by means of processing language input). Generations of underachieving language students should provide ample evidence that much more than exposure is involved in adult language learning.[7] Certainly "input" is extremely important, but in the limited time and artificial environment of the college classroom, that input requires thoughtful organization and repeated meaningful practice if it is to have the desired effect on student learning.

The Role of the Instructor in Creating a Language Course

During searches for literature faculty, candidates are often asked how they would structure a particular course, perhaps simply an introductory survey. Questions can address reasons behind the selection of readings, practical or theoretical approaches to the texts, kinds of assignments, formats of lecture and discussion, and various other practical aspects of course design. Savvy literature candidates will have prepared themselves to expect questions of this type and may even

have prepared sample syllabi. They know that their hypothetical courses will be evaluated for their intellectual coherence and content, and also for practical construction and pedagogical features. Talking about hypothetical courses is an important opportunity for candidates to "show their stuff" and try to persuade the committee that they are the best candidate for the position.

By contrast, language instructor candidates sometimes find themselves surprised by similar questions posed in connection with language courses. Asked how they would structure an introductory or intermediate language course, they may initially respond by asking what textbook is currently used or by agreeably offering to teach whatever textbook or other materials have been chosen. Such answers reveal a passivity toward course design and a kind of assembly-line image of language teaching, with instructors interchangeable and evaluated mainly in terms of how they perform in classes of language students. But why should language courses be predetermined? The enormous range of language content that has already been described, and the fact that language study requires both knowledge acquisition and *performance* adds a dimension of difficulty that makes course design, clearly understood goals, and thoughtful prioritization and sequencing that much more important. Not only do students have to learn a significant amount of content knowledge about the meaning capabilities of L2 grammar, lexical denotation and connotation, sociolinguistic and discourse behaviors, historical, artistic, and other cultural knowledge, but they have to combine that knowledge with skills to translate it into appropriate linguistic performance. Literature undergraduates are not expected to write fiction or poetry, but language students are expected to produce meaningful speech on a variety of topics. Language, rather than being a simpler instructional task, is a complex and difficult one, yet one that continues to be mistakenly conceived in rather primitive terms.

The paradigm shift from "more of the same" (that is, better techniques, livelier dialogues, newer textbooks, and jazzy multimedia forms of traditional activities) to a willingness to reflect on and reexamine basic assumptions about language study and language teaching is an important part of what we *should* be looking for in the hiring of language teachers. Literature candidates may be surprised by questions about what they expect students to "get" out of literature study, but the question is certainly valid. Similarly valid are questions that address the fundamental expectations of language study in American institutions. Just as in literature study, there are many answers; in fact, in language there may be even more justifiable answers than in literature. Well-prepared language instructors will have thought in terms

that allow multiple possibilities, seeing themselves as "proactive" in shaping course design in order to create the best possible courses for their students', their department's or their institution's aims.

Language Instruction and the Undergraduate Curriculum

Ladder-rank literature faculty will eventually find themselves serving on college and university committees and participating in policy decisions for their department and their institution. Such participation seems unsurprising, since literature faculty are members of the larger humanities faculty, who participate with natural and social science faculty in helping to shape the educational mission of their institution. Hiring committees will almost always consider a candidate's "administrative" potential, which may mean no more than the potential for sharing the burdens of student advising and routine committee work. What is significant is that such participation is assumed for literature candidates; although they arrive untutored, confidence in the appropriateness of the role smoothes entry into participation in the larger duties of college education.

Non-ladder rank language instructors, by contrast, have frequently been socialized to expect to be marginalized, excluded from policy and decision-making, and isolated from the larger academic community. The forces of such socialization are both implicit and explicit. Graduate students observe the marginalization of non-ladder-rank language faculty within their own departments and are less likely to be mentored by them and therefore to engage in the kinds of conversations that prepare students for future administrative roles. Throughout their graduate careers students are likely to hear repeated explicit messages about literature vs. language, many of which treat language teaching as a necessary evil (e.g., "Well, of course you will probably have to teach some language . . ." or "If you're lucky you won't have to teach beginning language" and so on). The usual pattern is for language teaching to be seen as unfortunate, regrettable, something the best and the brightest should be eager to avoid.

This message is unfortunate for many reasons. It reinforces the image of language study as being intellectually empty, a view that is simply wrong. After all, literature study is impossible without a rich and detailed understanding of language. Where the line between "language" and "literature" is drawn is one more social construction, and even a moment's reflection raises the question of whether a line should be drawn at all. Second, this message discourages those literature students who are genuinely interested in language from developing or

demonstrating that interest publicly in their departments and in their profession. Third, this negative message discourages application of energy to improving language instruction, treating language as the responsibility of "others," although it is not clear who those others are.

Although it is not likely that the forces of socialization will be easy to change, there is no reason that the frequent lament of search committees, that candidates present strong literature credentials but little experience of preparation for language, cannot be used to put pressure on the powers that shape graduate student programs. The more that search committees ask candidates thoughtful questions about language teaching—questions to which they would like to have answers, even if they don't necessarily expect to get them—the more candidates will return to their departments to report this aspect of their interviews and their need for better preparation. The more that language instructors resist the self-imposed aspects of their marginalization and contribute to discussions of undergraduate education, the more their presence will be felt. After all, to stop thinking and talking about larger issues of undergraduate education may be a perfectly understandable human response to external exclusion ("If my opinion isn't worth asking, why should I be working so hard? I'll just do what they expect and leave the rest to them . . ."), but as an internal response it is more difficult to justify. The more that graduate programs include some mentoring to prepare students for the professional responsibilities that come with faculty rank, the better able teachers of all ranks will be to participate in discussions of curricular policy and goals.

Implications for Graduate Student Preparation

A detailed plan for a curriculum that would adequately prepare graduate students in the areas listed above is beyond the scope of this article, a maneuver on my part which may seem to beg the most important question. But indeed the question is too complex to be answered briefly. Instead I will offer two steps toward the completion of such a project, two perspectives on the kind of information that will need to be considered. First I will borrow a technique from corporate hiring (*interviewing*) to create a simplified "job profile," the purpose of which is to detail a position's responsibilities, motivational conditions, and working conditions in order better to understand obligatory and desirable candidate strengths. The profile is then translated into a detailed list of candidate strengths, which in turn forms the basis for interview questions.

To highlight the disproportion in professional training, I will indicate correspondence between graduate preparation and expected job

conditions, not just for new tenure-track hires in literature, but also for non-ladder positions such as lecturer. Recall Kaplan's (1993) lament, quoted earlier: "None of us was prepared to deal with the difference between our training and our actual work, teaching French."

The following hypothetical job profile is a composite of expectations found in typical job advertisements. The assignment of items to the assistant professor vs. lecturer is impressionistic and intended to represent very general tendencies; of course there is tremendous diversity in jobs and exceptions are likely to be common. The point is that if an institution includes faculty of both ranks, non-ladder-rank faculty are more likely to be teaching courses on non-literary topics, and more likely to be left out of activities and privileges connected with departmental administration, research, and scholarship. While non-ladder faculty may continue to engage in research and publication, their work frequently is not supported by funding, time, or other resources and may not be recognized for salary increases or promotion. When resources are scarce, as with secretarial support, if available at all they usually go first to ladder faculty, and only rarely to non-ladder faculty.[8]

Hypothetical Job Profile

	in Grad Pro.	as Asst Prof.	as Lecturer
A. *Responsibilities* (and Expectations)			
1. Teach introductory-level language	as TA?	yes?	yes?
2. Teach intermediate-level language	as TA?	yes?	yes?
3. Develop new advanced courses, e.g., business or media		?	yes?
4. Teach literature courses	*	yes?	no?
5. Teach a civilization course		yes?	yes?
6. Investigate and introduce new multimedia materials		?	yes?
7. Run language tables, extracurricular activities	?	?	yes?
8. Supervise TAs		yes?	yes?
9. Teach methods course		?	yes?
10. Help to restructure curriculum		yes?	no?
11. Share in student advising		yes?	no?
12. Departmental and institutional committee work		yes?	no?
13. Papers and presentations at conferences	*	yes?	no?
14. Research and publication	*	yes?	no?

	in Grad Pro.	as Asst Prof.	as Lecturer
B. *Motivational Conditions* (Incentives/Rewards)			
Rank		Ladder	Non-ladder
Promotion		yes?	no?
Tenure (possible)		yes?	no?
Salary		By rank?	By course?
Eligible for leaves		yes?	no?
Eligible for teaching load reductions		yes?	no?
Eligible for support for conference travel		yes?	no?
C. *Working Conditions*			
Number of courses per year		4–6?	5–8?
Average class size		No difference?	
Availability of computers and technological support		yes?	no?
Secretarial support		?	no?

*Although students in literature programs study literature and write papers, preparation for the *teaching* of literature and the preparation of papers for presentation or publication are usually left to mentors or on the job learning. Some fortunate graduate students are able to teach literature discussion sections as part of faculty-taught lecture courses. More may have some exposure to language teaching, especially as TAs in beginning and intermediate-level courses.

Two particularly telling observations: (1) the list of responsibilities and expectations highlights the number of "professional duties" a new faculty member of either rank may encounter that are not part of traditional graduate preparation; (2) for Ph.D.s who take positions as lecturers, their disciplinary preparation (in literature scholarship) may be entirely absent from their responsibilities and reward structures. This means that their success as lecturers will depend primarily on preparation that has been ignored or little represented in their Ph.D. programs. This situation is particularly significant if we consider that according to the MLA's latest figures (for 1996–97), of Ph.D.s who remained in the United States and whose employment status is known, only 39.6% received tenure-track appointments, and a nearly equivalent percentage, 35.4%, took non-tenure-track appointments (Welles 2000).[9] Although graduate programs vary in placement, this statistic is alarming: nearly half of Ph.D.s who take positions in college teaching, although formally remaining in their field (language and literature), are teaching courses considered by their Ph.D. programs to be peripheral to their graduate training. Aversions to professional

training aside, we have to wonder at a profession that essentially closes its eyes to the primary needs of such a significant portion of its graduates. (Neither should we ignore the lucky 39% who succeed in obtaining tenure-track positions; their teaching will inevitably be part of the tenure portfolio, even if perhaps secondary in status to research and publication.)

Interview Questions

If candidates for language teaching were to be better prepared, what would we be asking them at interviews? What kinds of questions would we pose to elicit the kind of content knowledge about language that would parallel content expectations for literature? What kinds of questions should we prepare our graduate students to answer in the course of job interviews? Below is the beginning of a list of the kinds of interview questions that might be asked to elicit information about a language instructor's knowledge base. These questions have a triple function: (1) as a guide to the kind of preparation the ideal candidate *should* present (and therefore what should be covered in course work and mentoring); (2) as samples of the kinds of questions search committees *should* be asking (although only a subset of these questions would be asked in any given interview); (3) as sample questions for graduate student job candidates to prepare for their own interviews (and to bring up for discussion in their departments, both in preparation for the job search and for possible inclusion in future graduate training).

- What do you want students to accomplish in the first year of language instruction (and why)?
- Are there things that you would ideally want to accomplish but are hindered by lack of materials? What would ideal materials consist of?
- What is your opinion of existing textbooks (and why)? If you had free choice, what textbook would you choose (and why)?
- What supplementary materials would you use (and why)?

- What is your opinion regarding current debates about the role of explicit grammar instruction in language study (and why)?
- How would you introduce [a sample grammar topic, e.g., French *imparfait*]? How would you deal with this issue for more advanced students who are still making frequent errors?
- How would you explain/describe [a sample grammar topic, e.g., the difference between *ser* and *estar*]?
- How do you ensure that students master verb forms?
- How do you combine the development of communicative competence with the acquisition of language structure?
- What kinds of correction do you use, and why?
- How important do you think accuracy is at different levels of study?
- What do you do when you don't know the answer to a student's question about grammar?

- How do you teach vocabulary? (Explain.)
- How do you get students to avoid thinking of vocabulary in terms of cross-linguistic equivalents?
- How do you organize students' vocabulary acquisition from the textbook, readings, and other sources?
- For vocabulary practice do you rely on oral exercises? Written exercises? Other methods? (Explain.)
- Do you distinguish between the acquisition of vocabulary for reading, for aural comprehension, for speaking, and for writing?
- Are there particular techniques for vocabulary acquisition that you recommend or avoid?

- What kinds of socio-linguistic behaviors present particular problems for [the L2/C2]?
- Have you read anything from the literature of sociolinguistics about [the L2/C2] and/or U.S. culture?
- How do you deal with the dangers of stereotyping? What kinds of strategies do you suggest to combat it?
- How do you talk about culture without treating it as homogeneous and stable? How do you talk about difference within the societies of [the L2]?
- How do you think the problem of "language" vs. national cultures should be handled? (That is, for languages such as French and Spanish that are widely spoken in different

variants and in many different national cultures, how should language and culture be taught? Or, for example, Arabic, with a single classical form and mutually-incomprehensible vernaculars?)

- Do you encourage students to engage in cross-cultural comparison? Why or why not? If so, how?
- How would you handle such topics as [gender differences in language, gender differences in society, the nature and role of status distinctions, views on ethnic minorities, race, etc.]?
- What books might you recommend for students interested in further cultural exploration?
- What do you do when your own knowledge is insufficient?

- When you do think that students should begin reading?
- What should they read, and why (and when)?
- What is your understanding of how students develop the ability to read in the L2?
- What issues from research on the reading skill do you find most pertinent?
- How do you use writing in your classes?
- How do you develop the oral skills of speaking and listening?
- How important are oral skills compared to reading?
- What do you recommend to students who have a great deal of difficulty speaking?
- How do you take learning style differences into account?
- What do you think of explicit instruction on learning strategies?
- What do you do when students demonstrate difficulty in particular areas, such as aural comprehension or spelling?

- How would you describe the difference between the beginning and intermediate levels?
- How do you recommend addressing the specialized problems of heritage students?

etc.

Many more questions could be asked, to which candidates should be able to offer thoughtful responses. To explore "administrative" ability we might ask how language courses relate to other courses in the curriculum. If a candidate will teach advanced language, we need to ask specific questions about how the candidate will handle the combination of language and topic content, e.g. literature, business, current events. If candidates cannot discuss these issues thoughtfully, how prepared are they to teach them?[10] Would we hire literature specialists who could not thoughtfully discuss the interpretation and teaching of literature? Would we consider a literature candidate qualified to teach if that person had merely read literature extensively? Why would we consider a language candidate to be prepared to teach language if that person has merely "read and spoken extensively" (i.e., native or near-native ability in speaking)? We cannot ask for respect for language teaching if we are not ready to treat its preparation with the same seriousness that we exhibit toward other subjects in the college curriculum.

There is no doubt that such a list is likely to be intimidating for all involved, but that is its purpose—to highlight how low our expectations have traditionally been for teachers of language as compared to teachers in other specializations, and to point to the illogic of neglecting broader graduate-level study of language and culture in Ph.D. programs. Graduate study prepares scholars, but it also prepares teachers who will motivate and inspire future generations of students to consider becoming scholars themselves.

I do not wish to leave the impression that every language instructor candidate should be expected possess all imaginable strengths. Far from it. Every candidate will exhibit a different pattern of strengths (as in literature or any other specialization), and smart departments can assemble a constellation of strengths appropriate to their needs. Departments and programs responsible for the preparation and "training" of future language teachers can also make students aware of desirable standards of expertise, even if they cannot yet offer all of the coursework and training needed.

A Final Word

Language study has potential for a considerably greater contribution to the undergraduate curriculum than it currently provides. This potential includes significant practical (instrumental) accomplishment by language students, significant knowledge acquisition on the subject of culture and cross-cultural understanding, significant broadening of

experience as a vital contribution to undergraduate education. Long-respected goals of U.S. college education include preparation for citizenship and employment in an increasingly sensitive multicultural nation and an inevitably multicultural world. No amount of globalization will alter the nature of communities and the inclinations of local cultures to define themselves in terms of shared experience or to persist in efforts to preserve their distinctiveness. Language study is a unique means of access to the values and attitudes that create that distinctiveness. Well-taught language courses that sensitize students to the cultural differences of even a single L2/C2 can alert them to the unpredictability of cross-cultural similarity and difference in other cultures that they will encounter.

Some of the opinions expressed here will certainly be considered controversial, but it is precisely my intention to provoke discussion, to urge us to stop considering language teaching as a matter of technique, and to demand that candidates demonstrate a level of content knowledge comparable to what we expect for literature, linguistics, or any other college subject. Reflection on aspects of the language instructor candidate profile should be useful both for hiring committees and for programs that prepare and "train" language instructors. In both cases I think we have set our sights too low, dealing with questions of *how* but paying scant attention to questions of *what*, sidetracked from the potential value of language study's contribution to undergraduate education by tacit assumptions that limit our aspirations and our accomplishment. Language instructors hired to teach college language courses are college faculty, and we should hold them to the same high standard as any member of the college professoriate. That means that whether we are teaching them or hiring them, we should demand a level of *content knowledge* appropriate to a specialist, and stop allowing ourselves to settle for less because others, whether students or colleagues, believe that what we are talking about is "just" language.

Notes

1. I have used "mastery" in order not to digress into the issue of "learning" vs. "acquisition," a distinction that is irrelevant to this point.
2. One designation for this kind of grammatical knowledge for teachers is "pedagogical grammar." See Rutherford and Smith 1988.
3. See also Kramsch (1988) on contrasting associations for French *jeu* (associated with leisure and fun) vs. American English *game* (associated with sports and competition).
4. See also Hanvey 1979; Galloway 1985, as summarized in Omaggio Hadley 1993, p. 371. As a personal observation, I am convinced that such attitudes play a role in Russian language students' apparent unwillingness to conform to status distinctions in greetings and other social rituals characteristic of Russian culture. Students appear to earnestly believe that their democratic disregard for social status is preferable to the Russian status-conscious system they encounter, and at the same time they show an aversion to submitting to a status hierarchy that places them lower than their customary place in American society. The result is that they often behave in ways that are perceived as inappropriately and often rudely casual.
5. It should go without saying that no homogeneity of opinion or cultural perspective is intended. By "attitudes," "interpretations," "values," and other terms I intend a plurality of interpretations and attitudes.
6. Rutherford's summary draws on Kelly 1969.
7. For a helpful comparison of child language acquisition and adult language learning see Bley-Vroman 1988.
8. It should be emphasized again that this list is impressionistic and that variation is wide. For every tendency indicated here there are no doubt dozens of exceptions. Where those exceptions award greater privileges to non-ladder faculty we can be pleased, but exceptions do not alter the general tendency.
9. Certainly some of the non-tenure track appointments may be at the professorial level, but they are typically short-term and different in status from continuing appointments. According to Welles (2000), the remaining approximately 25% of Ph.D.s are spread among post-doctoral fellowships, academic administration, placement outside higher education, unknown employment, and unemployed.
10. Literature specialists may wonder how they could ask such questions if they themselves do not have a confident sense of the answers, and certainly having at least one language specialist on a hiring committee would be advantageous. Even without such assistance, however, the questions should be asked. Does the candidate offer something more than intuitive, experiential answers? Can the candidate contrast differing opinions or perspectives?

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